

## MID BEDFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **ETHICS & STANDARDS COMMITTEE** held in Room 15, Priory House, Chicksands, Shefford on Wednesday, 3 December 2008

### PRESENT

Miss D C Maggs (Chairman)  
Cllr J Street (Vice-Chairman)

Cllrs P N Aldis  
Mrs W P Smith

Independent Member(s): Mr J Dann  
Miss B Heley

Parish Representatives: Mrs E Brown  
Mr B Collier

Apologies for Absence: Cllr P B Carne

Officers in Attendance: Mrs M Clampitt – Committee Administrator  
Mrs B Morris – Director of Corporate & Democratic Services

ES/08/10 **MINUTES**

### **RESOLVED**

***that the Minutes of the meeting of the Ethics and Standards Committee held on 4 June 2008 have previously been circulated be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.***

ES/08/11 **MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

(a) **Personal Interests:-**  
**None.**

(b) **Personal and Prejudicial Interests:-**  
**None.**

ES/08/12 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

No applications had been received under Procedure Rule No. CM9 to speak during the 15 minute question and statement period at the beginning of the meeting. Furthermore there had been no applications to speak under the public participation scheme on any items included on the Agenda for this meeting.

ES/08/13 **CONSULTATION - COMMUNITIES IN CONTROL: REAL PEOPLE, REAL POWER: CODES OF CONDUCT FOR LOCAL AUTHORITY MEMBERS AND EMPLOYEES**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Monitoring Officer, which was to respond to a consultation in respect of the Members' Code of Conduct and the introduction of a Code of Conduct for Employees.

The Committee reviewed the response to the Consultation document and agreed with the comments made and suggested some additional suggestions on the area of Gifts and Hospitality declarations and the length of time between crime and conviction and action being taken by the Assessment Committee.

Additionally, Members felt that the Employee Code was somewhat heavy handed and would normally be covered through Conditions of Service. Lastly the Monitoring Officer agreed to provide Members with a definition of 'qualifying employees'.

**RESOLVED**

***that the representations, as amended and set out in Appendix 'A' to the report of the Monitoring Officer, in response to the Consultation document, be endorsed.***

ES/08/14 **CORPORATE COMPLAINTS**

The Director of Corporate and Democratic Services presented the report of the Interim Corporate Complaints Manager, which provided Members with information relating to complaints determined by the Local Government Ombudsman during the first and second quarters of 2008 and those where a compensatory payment was made.

The Director of Corporate and Democratic Services reported to Members that the Local Government Ombudsman had determined 1 complaint for the period 1 April – 30 June 2008. The complaint had been received during the fourth quarter (1 January - 31 March 2008) and dealt with under the Ombudsman's discretion, which was where no or insufficient injustice had been found to warrant pursuing the matter further.

The Local Government Ombudsman had also determined 2 complaints for the period 1 July – 30 September 2008. One complaint was found to have no or insufficient evidence of maladministration. The second complaint had required a compensation payment and had been recorded by the Ombudsman as a “local settlement”.

During the last quarter (1 July - 30 September 2008) 3 complaints were received. One complaint was awaiting a decision and would be reported at the March meeting. One complaint had received a compensatory payment under the delegated authority of the Director of Corporate and Democratic Services (DoCDS/C26). The complaint had been received during the first quarter (1 April – 30 June 2008). The final complaint had previously been dealt with at Stage 2 of the Council’s Corporate Complaints procedure. A ‘local settlement’ was paid along with a ‘time and trouble’ payment. This complaint was not formally investigated by the Local Government Ombudsman.

**RESOLVED**

- 1. that the complaints determined by the Local Government Ombudsman during the first and second quarters of 2008 and those where a compensatory payment has been made as set out in paragraph 5 of the report of the Interim Corporate Complaints Manager, be noted.**
  
- 2. that the compensatory payments approved by the Director of Corporate and Democratic Services under the Council’s Corporate Complaints Procedure as set out in paragraphs 6 and 7 of the report of the Interim Corporate Complaints Manager, be noted.**

(Note: The meeting commenced at 6.30 p.m. and concluded at 7.30 p.m.)

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